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SUBJECT: USG-UK COOPERATION CONTINUES ON TURKEY'S CT ISSUES

¶1. (SBU) SUMMARY: During July 6-8 meetings in London, Embassy Ankara's Resident Legal Advisor (RLA) and her British counterparts agreed that Turkey is unlikely to change its attitude toward its terrorism legislation without clear evidence of the law's inadequacy. Separately, the UK proposed working with the U.S. on Turkey's Draft Judicial Reform Strategy under the newly-launched "Transatlantic Dialogue." The consultations, as a whole, were exceptionally useful in identifying areas of common concern and mutual interest. END SUMMARY.

London Meetings  
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¶2. (SBU) Ankara's RLA traveled to London July 6-8 at the invitation of the British Embassy in Ankara. Over two days, the RLA met representatives from the UK Home Office (extradition, legislation, Turkey-specific and counter-terrorism); Foreign Office (Turkey desk and counter-terrorism); Ministry of Justice (international team); Crown Prosecution Service; and the Metropolitan Police. The Department of Justice (DOJ) Criminal Division Attache assigned to Embassy London also attended a number of the meetings.

¶3. (SBU) Many of the meetings focused on Turkey's definition of terrorism which the UK, like the USG, regards as unduly narrow. Despite numerous attempts by high-level UK officials to get Turkey to broaden the definition, Turkey has remained unmoved. U.S. and UK representatives generally agreed that continuing to push the Turks on this issue is unlikely to yield any success, and is probably a waste of valuable political capital. They also agreed we should continue to look for cases that demonstrate our position (i.e., that Turkey's laws are inadequate in certain circumstances) but that in the meantime we should focus on issues where we may be able to have a greater, and more immediate, impact.

¶4. (SBU) The UK is very interested in working with the USG as part of a newly-launched "Transatlantic Dialogue" designed to foster mutual efforts in areas of common concern. One topic of conversation was the possibility of working together on Turkey's Draft Judicial Reform Strategy, which aims to bring Turkey in line with EU norms. (NOTE: Although the "Strategy" identifies the issues that need to be addressed to improve Turkey's criminal justice system, it fails to set forth concrete steps for moving forward. END NOTE.)

Comment  
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¶5. (SBU) The successful meetings in London highlight the value of continuing to work with our European partners on issues of mutual concern. In June, S/CT PDAS Schlicher led a delegation, which

included the RLA, to Copenhagen and Brussels. Those meetings underscored the value of a collaborative approach to Turkey-related issues (i.e., the PKK and Roj-TV). Continuing to maintain open and frequent communication with our European colleagues is essential. We should pursue the UK's offer to jointly address Turkey's Draft Judicial Reform Strategy.

JEFFREY